

1 Peter 2:5

by John Gill

As lively stones, saints are built up as a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

Scripture: Romans 12:1, Ephesians 2:19, 1 Peter 2:5

Topics: "Spiritual Identity", "Priesthood of Believers"

Description

John Gill emphasizes that believers are likened to 'lively stones' in 1 Peter 2:5, illustrating how they are transformed by God's grace from ordinary stones in the quarry to vital components of a spiritual house. This transformation signifies their role in the church, which serves as a dwelling place for God, distinct from the physical temples of the past. Gill highlights that all believers are part of a holy priesthood, called to offer spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. The sermon underscores the importance of living in accordance with the Spirit and engaging in spiritual worship and service. Ultimately, it calls believers to recognize their identity and purpose within the body of Christ.

Transcript

Ver. 5. Ye also, as lively stones,.... Saints likewise are compared to stones; they lie in the same quarry, and are the same by nature as the rest of mankind, till dug out and separated from thence by the powerful and efficacious grace of God, when they are hewn, and made fit for the spiritual building; where both for their ornament, beauty, and strength, which they receive from Christ, they are compared to stones, and are lasting and durable, and will never perish, nor be removed out of the building: and because of that life which they derive from him, and have in him, they are called "lively", or "living stones"; the spirit of life having entered into them, a principle of life being implanted in them, and coming to Christ, the living stone, they live upon him, and he lives in them; and his grace in them is a well of living water, springing up into eternal life. It was usual with poets and philosophers to call stones, as they lie in the quarry before they are taken out of it, "living" ones: so Virgil {p}, describing the seats of the nymphs, says, "intus aquae dulces vivoque sedilia saxo, nympharum domus", &c. but here the apostle calls such living stones, who were taken out from among the rest: the stones which Deucalion and Pyrrha cast over their heads after the flood are called {q} zwoyentev liyoi, "quicken'd stones", they becoming men, as the fable says. "Are built up a spiritual house"; these living stones being laid, and cemented together, in a Gospel church state, become the house of God in a spiritual sense, in distinction from the material house of the tabernacle, and temple of old, to which the allusion is; and which is built up an habitation for God, by the Spirit, and is made up of spiritual men; such as have the Spirit of God, and savour the things of the Spirit, and worship

God in Spirit and in truth; among whom spiritual services are performed, as prayer, praise, preaching, and hearing the word, and administering ordinances. Some read these words in the imperative, as an exhortation, "be ye built up as lively stones; and be ye spiritual temples and holy priests", as the Syriac version. A synagogue with the Jews is called ygxwr tyb, "a spiritual house" {r}; and so is the third temple which the Jews expect in the times of the Messiah; of which one of their writers {s} thus says:

"it is known from the ancient wise men, that the future redemption, with which shall be the third ynxwr, "spiritual" sanctuary, is the work of God, and will not be as the former redemptions: "I will fill this house with glory"; this is ynxwr, "a spiritual" one, for even the walls shall be Myynxwr, "spiritual"--for even all this "house" shall be "spiritual"; for that which was then built, which is the second, shall be turned into another a "spiritual" one:"

and which has been already done, and is what the apostle means here, the church, under the Gospel dispensation, or the Gospel church state, in opposition to the worldly sanctuary, and carnal worship of the Jews.

An holy priesthood; in allusion to the priests under the law, who were set apart, and sanctified for that office; but now, under the Gospel, all the saints are priests unto God, and are all appointed and directed

to offer up spiritual sacrifices; their whole selves, souls, and bodies, as a holy, living, and acceptable sacrifice; their prayers and praises, and all good works done in faith, and from love, and to the glory of God; particularly acts of kindness and beneficence to poor saints; these are called spiritual, in distinction from legal sacrifices, and because offered in a spiritual manner, under the influence, and by the assistance of the Spirit of God, and with their spirits. So the Jews speak of spiritual sacrifices, as distinct from material ones:

"the intellectual sacrifice (they say {t}) is before the material sacrifices, both in time and excellency.--Cain brought an offering to the Lord of the fruit of the earth, and behold the intellectual attention did not agree with it, which is ynxwrh Nbrq, "the spiritual sacrifice"."

Now such are

acceptable to God by Jesus Christ; through whom they are offered up; for it is through him the saints have access to God, present themselves to him, and their services; and both persons and services are only accepted in Christ, and for his sake, and in virtue of his sacrifice, which is always of a sweet smelling savour to God.

{p} Aeneid. l. 1. {q} Eustathius in Homer. Iliad. 1. {r} Neve Shalom apud Caphtor, fol. 14. 1. {s} R. Alshech. in Hagg. ii. 7, 8, 9, 10. {t} Neve Shalom apud Caphtor, fol. 88. 2. Vid. Raziel. fol. 33. 1.

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